

Suzlon Commends Renewed Bi-Partisan Effort to Advance a Federal Renewable Electricity Standard (RES)

CHICAGO, Sept. 21 /PRNewswire/ -- "We commend the efforts of Senators Bingaman and Brownback to advance a stand-alone federal Renewable Electricity Standard (RES) bill with the goal of passing legislation this year," said Andris Cukurs, chief executive officer of Suzlon Wind Energy Corporation. "A swift passage of a bill is essential to the continued growth of the U.S. wind energy industry. Quite simply, the U.S. cannot afford to wait any longer."

"If passed, this bi-partisan legislation will help diversify our energy portfolio, improving our energy security and creating green jobs. A national RES is essential to foster stable, long-term investment in wind energy in this country," said Cukurs.

About Suzlon Wind Energy Corporation (SWECO)

Suzlon Wind Energy Corporation focuses on the North American market and is a subsidiary of Suzlon Energy Limited of Pune, India, the third largest global wind turbine supplier.* The headquarters for North America is based in Chicago, Illinois, with sales and service offices located across the U.S.

Suzlon Wind Energy Corporation, when combined with REpower,** is ranked fourth in U.S. market share for 2009, according to the American Wind Energy Association (AWEA). Together, our sites include more than 700 turbines installed in the U.S. and totaling 1,750 megawatts (MW) of capacity across 20 states. Suzlon also manufactures wind turbine blades for its S88-2.1 MW machine in Pipestone, Minnesota.

NOTES:

* Suzlon and REpower, if taken together, stand as the world's third leading wind turbine supplier group in terms of market share. Market share of 9.8% is derived from BTM consult ApS World Market Update 2009, ranking Suzlon with 6.4% of global market share and REpower with 3.4% of global market share.

** Suzlon owns more than 90 per cent of REpower Systems AG, based in Hamburg, Germany.

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Could wind push energy bill to fruition?

Aug 27, 2010 09:58 EDT

Reuters

Andy Cukurs

<http://blogs.reuters.com/environment/2010/08/could-wind-push-energy-bill-to-fruition/>
[environment](#) | [green business](#) | [green energy](#)



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—Andris (Andy) E. Cukurs is chief executive officer of North American operations of India-based Suzlon Energy Ltd., the world's third-largest wind turbine manufacturer. Any views expressed here are his own.—

The climate bill may have stalled and, with it, a renewable electricity standard that would promote wind and other renewable-energy sources. But at the same time, wind energy continues to make strong strides.

Just look at the commitment of large corporations, like Google, purchasing 20 years of wind-generated electricity in Iowa, ostensibly to operate its huge data centers. Or SC Johnson & Son, installing turbines at its Wisconsin headquarters and putting up a windmill at its largest European manufacturing plant – in addition to nearly half its Ziploc plant in Michigan powered with wind.

Is this how the use of wind and other renewables will play out in the States, with corporations leading the way?

Major electric utilities ramp up wind energy gradually alongside long-term incentives, but corporations like Google and SC Johnson are using wind turbines right where they're needed.

The company I work for, Suzlon, started this way in India – by bringing clean, reliable power to businesses that needed it.

What is preventing even broader growth of wind power in the U.S.?

Billions of dollars were spent building our wind capacity over the past decade, yet wind energy still generated just 1.25 percent of our electricity in 2008 (although that's up from 0.4 percent just four years earlier).

The 1.25 percentage is a far cry from the 20 percent goal the U.S. Energy Department set for wind's share of the U.S. electric supply by 2030. It also falls far below the Energy Information Agency's projection in May 2009 that by 2012 – less than 18 months away – wind energy will generate 5 percent of electricity.

Much more recently, the U.S. added only 1239 megawatts of wind power installations in the first half of 2010, dropping such installations to the lowest level since 2007. Manufacturing investment in wind also continues to lag below levels in the 2008-2009 period.

As for the benefits of wind, they're indisputable.

Wind promotes national security because it diversifies our energy portfolio. It also has the tremendous potential to create jobs — jobs that deliver clean, affordable, reliable domestic energy to promote economic vitality and environmental quality besides our national security.

Wind-power projects created 35,000 new jobs in 2008, estimates the American Wind Energy Association. And in one state, Illinois, each new wind-turbine project generates 1,473 new jobs during construction, a new Illinois State University study found.

As for clean energy, wind produces no emissions and no dangerous radioactive waste.

Wind-energy generation also doesn't consume any non-renewable resources, such as oil, natural gas or coal.

Wind is free and with today's technology advances, it can be captured efficiently, at about one-quarter the cost of solar power. Further, wind turbines come in a wide array of sizes. This means that a range of people and businesses can use them on a self-reliant basis – from single households and businesses to small towns and villages.

Besides, strong consumer support exists for wind.

A survey released in June 2010 by Applied Materials, a capital-equipment maker serving the solar industry among others found that three-quarters of Americans feel that increasing renewable energy and decreasing U.S. dependence on foreign oil are the nation's top energy priorities.

As for wind alone, an April 2010 survey by AWEA found that 89 percent of respondents – 84 percent of Republicans, 93 percent of Democrats and 88 percent of Independents – believe increasing the amount of energy the nation gets from wind is a good idea.

Wind energy faces challenges, of course; all energy sources do. It's true that wind can't provide all of our nation's energy supply, but that's why the U.S. requires a portfolio of energy sources, especially of renewable forms. And it's possible to generate a significant portion of energy from renewable sources.

Already, wind power supplies more than 20 percent of the energy consumed in Denmark and more than 11 percent in Spain and Portugal.

Many of the perceived disadvantages are just myths. Wind energy isn't universally more expensive; it's very competitive with fossil sources of generation.

While the upfront capital cost of wind energy is more expensive than some traditional power sources, such as natural gas, there are no fuel costs with wind. Further, in good locations, the cost of capital and other "levelized" costs are now very competitive with other energy sources, research studies show.

It's a myth, too, that insurmountable transmission issues emerge trying to get wind energy from remote areas to customers elsewhere.

A recent Stanford University study found that about one-third of the electricity that wind farms generate will become a reliable source of around-the-clock power to customers in various U.S. regions through electricity grid interconnections.

Another myth concerns the dependability of wind – that it may not blow during periods of peak demand and it's difficult to store. It's true that wind turbines generate electricity 65 percent to 80 percent of the time, so the output amount is variable. But no power plant generates at its maximum 100 percent potential. Because of the electricity grid's intelligent design, no need exists to back up every megawatt of wind energy with a megawatt of fossil fuel or dispatchable power. The reality is that while wind energy is naturally variable, it's not unreliable. In addition, wind won't supply all of our electricity anyway; that's the reason wind should serve as one portion of a diversified energy portfolio.

Let's discard several other untruths. *Wind turbines are noisy.* A Lawrence Technological University study found that it's difficult to distinguish the sound of a turbine from the rustling of corn stalks.

Wind turbines kill birds. Yes, an estimated 28,500 a year – while buildings kills 550 million; power lines, 130 million; cats, 100 million; autos, 80 million; and pesticides, 67 million, estimates the U.S. Forest Service.

Wind projects require more concrete and steel than other power sources. Wind towers do need concrete and steel for their foundations, but simply consider the gargantuan amount of concrete and steel required for a nuclear plant or a hydroelectric power plant.

Add up the scorecard and it's hard to question that the advantages of wind far outweigh the negatives. That's why it's disheartening to see such a dark political climate for renewable energy in general and wind specifically.

The U.S. needs a national renewable-electricity standard that would set a percentage, say 15 percent by 2020, of electricity generated for utilities that would have to come from wind and other renewable energy sources.

A growing number of major countries in Europe, Asia and elsewhere, as well as several states in the U.S. such as California and Texas, already have set ambitious standards. For the U.S., a national RES is essential to foster stable, long-term investment in wind energy.

Tom Friedman of the New York Times contends that if Congress doesn't pass a serious energy bill, "we may not have another shot until ... we get a "perfect storm" – a climate or energy crisis that is awful enough to finally end our debate on these issues but not so awful as to end the world."

Will it take another crisis before we wake up to the clear value of wind energy? Let's not find out. It's time to re-energize the broader growth of wind energy in America.

Photo shows a state-of-the-art wind turbine at the U.S. National Renewable Energy Laboratory's (NREL) National Wind Technology Center (NWTC) spins on a sunny day near Boulder, Colorado July 21, 2010. REUTERS/Rick Wilking



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Illinois Lures Wind Farm Away from Missouri with Bold Energy Policy Affinity Wind is building its first wind farm in Illinois, not home state Missouri, because of a wind-friendly RPS there — and it's not alone

By Maria Gallucci
Jan 28, 2011

When St. Louis University (SLU) business professor Trey Goede and his students sought to turn their plan for a \$250 million wind facility into reality, they headed to neighboring Illinois, where the wind is powerful and so is clean power demand.

They aren't alone. Once known only for coal and nuclear, a robust renewable energy policy is making Illinois a magnet for commercial wind farm developers of all stripes.

The SLU classroom project, which became Affinity Wind, LLC in 2007, will break ground this spring on the first 36 megawatts of a 150 megawatt-plan. The second phase is slated for 2012. The 75-turbine project in the state's western Pike County is on par with other utility-scale wind farms cropping up across the industrial Midwest.

Goede, Affinity Wind's founder and CEO, said his decision to set up the facility out of state was fairly simple.

"At the time, Illinois had a renewable portfolio standard (RPS), and Missouri did not," Goede told SolveClimate News. "Illinois has been the benefactor of a strong RPS."

In its 2007 Illinois Power Agency Act, the state ordered utility companies to purchase 25 percent of energy from renewable sources in 2025, an aggressive rate compared with the 10 to 15 percent targets of neighboring states.

Aggressive RPS, Transmission Lures Developers

Particularly enticing to Goede, however, was that 18 percent of Illinois' 25 percent mandate must be from wind, a move that is spurring demand for the renewable resource.

The state is already outperforming others in supply. While Illinois ranks 14 among states for potential wind capacity, it is sixth nationwide in installed wind power for 2010, with nearly 2,000 megawatts, according to the American Wind Energy Association.

Unlike its windier and sparsely populated Midwest counterparts, such as North and South Dakota, high-voltage transmission lines already crisscross Illinois to service its vast energy industry, which counts more nuclear power plants than any other state and has the third-largest coal reserves nationwide.

The lines are also closer to major cities like Chicago and could reach up to 50 million people in a dozen East Coast states on a shared electric grid run by PJM Interconnection, a regional transmission organization.

"This is another reason why we're seeing Illinois move forward a lot faster" than other states in wind energy development, said Kevin Borgia, executive director of the Illinois Wind Energy Association, which is not affiliated with the national organization.

Barry Matchett, a co-legislative director at the Environmental Law & Policy Center in Chicago, said that Illinois ranks among the top five states for both electricity production and consumption in the country, signaling a large market for renewable energy.

"This is a big state to have an RPS in," he said.

To Goede, the state's policies and well-developed infrastructure spelled opportunity for his students' business plan.

Landowners, Utilities Eager for Wind's Arrival

The project started as a field trip nearly four years ago, when the SLU professor began taking students on the one-and-a-half-hour drive to Pike County to meet with landowners, local utilities and farmers to learn what needed to be done to carry out a large-scale wind project.

The first step was finding transmission lines there with enough space to carry power generated by a new wind farm.

The next was garnering local support, which was relatively easy to achieve. Projects in more populated counties usually face opposition from residents concerned about wind turbines generating noise and blocking towns' potential expansion. But Pike County, a division of around 17,000 people spread over 500,000 acres, was eager for wind development to bring money to the area, said Blake Roderick of the Pike County Farm Bureau.

"Everybody has been waiting with great anticipation for wind projects to get off the ground," he said. The county passed a zoning ordinance in 2006 to facilitate land use by wind developers. Unlike other counties, where conditional ordinances require a lengthy permit review process, Pike's permitted use ordinance means that developers meeting minimal requirements can breeze past the red tape. The farm bureau has worked closely with Goede to find landowners to lease their properties for wind turbines. Prairie Power Inc., a local electric generation and transmission cooperative, was the first to jump on board in Pike County. The co-op proposed building a \$66 million, 20-turbine wind farm in 2008, but the project was put on hold because of the global economic downturn.

That same year, the SLU initiative officially became Affinity Wind LLC, an independent, utility-scale wind energy developer. As the St. Louis-based firm collected \$1.15 million in capital investments for its proposed Illinois wind farm, Prairie Power saw an opportunity to hand off to Goede the transmission lines and landowner lease agreements it had already secured.

Wind Giant Suzlon Enters the Picture

The biggest boost for the project, however, came on Jan. 14, when Goede announced that Affinity Wind entered into a joint venture agreement with Chicago-based Suzlon Wind Energy Corp., a subsidiary of Suzlon Energy Limited in Pune, India.

Suzlon ranked third among the world's leading wind turbine suppliers in terms of market share in 2009, with 15,000 megawatts of installed wind energy capacity in 25 countries.

"We felt this was a sound value investment that could offer a solid return, which we would expect to lead to new business opportunities for Suzlon," said Andy Cukurs, the subsidiary's CEO, in an email to SolveClimate News. "Due to the high load demand and favorable market conditions in Illinois, and particularly the Chicago area, this wind power plant makes for an interesting investment."

In the 50-50 partnership, which is called Surity Wind, Suzlon will provide the 75 turbines plus additional financial backing, although Goede did not specify the amount. He said that the project was not receiving any federal or state incentives, but that Surity would apply for state investment tax credits, employee tax credits and possible property tax abatement in the next few years.

The CEO expects the classroom-turned-real world enterprise to bring economic benefits to Pike County residents.

Using the U.S. Department of Energy's latest Jobs and Economic Development Impacts (JEDI) Wind Energy Model, Affinity Wind estimates that the wind farm could create some \$44 million in local spending during construction and \$3 million per year once completed. More than \$1 million in annual property taxes and several hundred thousand dollars in lease payments to landowners could be generated, along with 600 new jobs.

A 30-year forecast predicts more than \$175 million for the county will come from direct spending and property tax assessment.

10,000 Jobs, \$3.2 Billion in Economic Benefits

Since 2003, Illinois has leaped from 50 megawatts in wind farms to nearly 2,000 megawatts from 21 projects this year, with 85 percent coming online in 2007 and beyond.

According to a June 2010 economic impact study by the Center for Renewable Energy at Illinois State University, wind farm development has created about 10,000 full-time jobs during construction periods and nearly 500 permanent jobs in rural Illinois, totaling \$509 million and \$25 million in payroll, respectively.

Annual property taxes generate \$18 million for local economies, while landowners see \$8.3 million each year in extra income through leases to wind farm developers. Overall, the center expects the projects to generate \$3.2 billion in economic benefits over the life of the projects.

Borgia of the Illinois Wind Energy Association said the state could do even more.

To meet RPS requirements, Illinois utility companies are mostly purchasing renewable energy certificates (RECs) rather than actual electricity generated by wind farms. But to secure financing for projects,

developers first need power-purchase agreements (PPAs), in which utilities or companies agree in advance to buy electricity once the wind farm operates.

"Illinois has been held back a little bit by relying too much on tradable RECs," he said, noting that bundled power agreements – a mix of RECs and PPAs – have met with success. Bundled procurements last year ushered in the 200-megawatt Bishop Hill Wind Energy Center by Invenenergy Wind and the 106.5-megawatt Shady Oaks wind farm from China's Goldwind Science and Technology Company. and Ireland-based Mainstream Renewable Power.



Elgin

Wind energy company chooses Elgin

Melissa Jenco, TribLocal reporter

Aug. 27, 2010

Elgin is welcoming another wind energy company to the city.

India-based Suzlon will open a 65,000-square foot distribution center and training facility in Northwest Corporate Park near Randall Road just north of Interstate 90.

The company, which is the world's third largest wind turbine supplier, chose Elgin over finalists Kansas City, Denver and Minneapolis.

"This is a huge coup for Elgin and continues to establish Elgin as a place people are looking to for growing alternative energy businesses," Mayor Ed Schock said.

Suzlon will bring 20 people to Elgin every two weeks for training, which Schock said will benefit the city's hotels and restaurants.

Company officials cited logistics and the cost of transportation as being reasons they chose Elgin. Duncan Koerbel, president of global services, said the Chicago area is "logistically an excellent place for us to provide spare parts and stocking services for our ever-expanding fleet."

The company's North American headquarters is in Chicago. One of its suppliers, Siemens Energy Automation, Inc., which produces wind turbine gear drives, has plants in Elgin.

Suzlon's new facility is expected to open Oct. 4.

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Suzlon opens Illinois distribution centre

Mark Anderson, Windpower Monthly, 17 November 2010, 3:21pm

UNITED STATES: Suzlon has expanded its US logistical operations with the launch of a 20,000-sq-metre distribution centre in Elgin, Illinois.

The new facility, near the company's North American headquarters in Chicago, is intended to reduce transportation costs and provide shorter transit times for turbines and related equipment.

Suzlon expects to save money by employing a "milk-run" model that includes shipping on regularly scheduled dates using pre-planned outbound and returning freight lines.

The Elgin facility will also house a new training programme with on-site access to Suzlon components. Close proximity to O'Hare airport will also provide easy access for training and customer visits.

Suzlon Wind Energy CEO Andy Cukurs said: "In addition to giving us the edge in transportation costs and logistics for turbine components, the facility will become home to our new world-class training programme for wind technicians in 2011."

Last month Suzlon and developer Affinity Wind revealed a joint venture for building a two-phase 150MW wind project in west-central Illinois, with the first phase expected online next year.

But earlier this month Suzlon announced 110 layoffs, effective in December, at its blade factory in Pipestone, Minnesota. Roughly three dozen employees will be retained to re-tool the plant for larger blades in anticipation of a US market recovery.

Suzlon, the world's fourth-largest wind energy company, has a presence in 25 countries across five continents.

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Andris Cukurs, Chicago, letter: How Congress can support wind power

Creating jobs and revving the economy will be top priorities in Congress when the new lawmakers take office, including North Dakota Rep. Rick Berg and Sen. John Hoeven.

By: **Andris Cukurs**

CHICAGO — Creating jobs and revving the economy will be top priorities in Congress when the new lawmakers take office, including North Dakota Rep. Rick Berg and Sen. John Hoeven.

The growth of America's wind energy industry has been a bright spot in the economy across the country. In fact, of all the new energy capacity installed in 2009 in the U.S., 50 percent came from renewables. We urge Berg and Hoeven to help continue that strong growth.

Thirty-seven states now have wind turbines generating tens of thousands of megawatts of electricity and millions of dollars in local and state tax revenues and lease payments. In addition, these wind projects have produced 85,000 manufacturing jobs at more than 400 factories, with new jobs created in every state.

North Dakota is a key state for wind energy growth. Google invested in wind projects in the state. Already, two wind farms have been built with potential for additional renewable energy projects.

Foremost, current congressional members have a chance to make an important decision that immediately would benefit the wind energy sector in the new year. The Section 1603 Treasury Grant Program, part of last year's stimulus plan, will expire at the end of 2010. These tax provisions are vital to the continued growth of renewable energy. Last year, the cash grants helped sustain the wind industry during a time when the tax equity market vanished.

Without this legislation, the wind sector will lose development and production incentives.

In addition to the Section 1603 provision extension, the freshman class of 2011 is positioned to lead the charge to pass a national renewable electricity standard soon after Congress convenes in January.

Thirty states already have their own standard, which sets a percentage of electricity that must come from wind and other renewable energy sources by a certain date — say, 2020. And the 30 governors in those states are backing a national standard to stimulate new investment in renewable-energy projects.

But governors aren't the only backers of wind power. A recent Rasmussen Report finds that 60 percent of voters believe investing in wind and other renewable energy sources offers a better long-term investment than in investing in fossil-fuel energy.

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Wind is a proven energy technology, and its costs often are competitive with energy generated from fossil fuels. And a bipartisan group of four Republicans and four Democrats have introduced a national renewable energy standard that they hope will get clearance early in the next session if lawmakers don't approve it in the current lame-duck session.

But it's the new members of Congress, familiar with how wind power supports job creation and the economy in their states, who can spark a call to action among their fellow lawmakers to pass a national renewable energy standard. We welcome their action.

Andris Cukurs

Cukurs is CEO of North American operations of Suzlon Energy, the world's third-largest wind turbine maker.



We are at an interesting time in the energy industry. The gulf spill and the recent natural gas pipeline explosion serve as reminders that we need to focus our attention on the bigger energy-policy picture. We are also in the midst of campaign season and what will likely be a potential shake up within Congress. It has become increasingly more important for our government officials to be able to support proven solutions and this stands true for the energy industry.

Contemporary energy security demands a mixed basket of energy sources. A move to a more balanced energy portfolio will deliver the security we require. It also will increase the number of business opportunities and open a pathway to creating thousands of green jobs. I wrote about the need for energy security and a diversified portfolio for an opinion article that can be seen at [Reuters](#).

As for the latest Suzlon developments, October will prove a busy month for us. On Oct. 12, Suzlon customer Iberdrola Renewables will dedicate its Rugby Wind Farm, a \$300 million, 149-megawatt wind power project comprised of seventy-one Suzlon turbines near Rugby, North Dakota. The wind farm can create enough electricity for more than 52,000 homes in 60 member communities in the states of Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota.

On Thursday, Oct. 14, we will host a grand opening of a new 65,000-square-foot distribution and training center in Elgin, Illinois. This facility, which will train 20 people every two weeks on how to maintain Suzlon wind turbines, will also significantly improve our business efficiency by centralizing our parts warehousing. Its location near our Chicago headquarters makes it ideal from a logistics and distribution standpoint. Naturally, I'm open to any questions you might have regarding Suzlon, and invite you to see our new facility in Elgin, Illinois or our impressive 24/7 monitoring center located at our corporate headquarters in Chicago.

Best wishes,
Andris Cukurs

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Let's Seize the Opportunity to Pass a Renewable Electricity Standard This Year



Tulsi Tanti

Founder, Suzlon Energy Limited

Posted: October 4, 2010 11:11 AM

Let's hope that a bipartisan group of six U.S. senate visionaries can accomplish what so far has eluded those of us hoping to bring more clean energy to the U.S. That is to prod federal lawmakers into passing a national renewable electricity standard this year yet. Our world needs the U.S. to adopt such a standard to help solve our planet's long-term energy puzzle.

The senators, led by Democrat Jeff Bingaman of New Mexico and Republican Sam Brownback of Kansas, introduced in September a stand-alone bill that would require utilities to purchase at least 15 percent of their electric supplies by 2021 from renewable-energy resources such as wind, solar, geothermal and hydropower. Their surprise move came as it appeared such a national RES vote was dead for this year in Congress.

And it is far from certain that anything will happen. For the proposed legislation to move forward, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid will need to let it come up for a floor vote. Then at least 60 Senators must vote in favor of it. Still, we applaud the efforts of the senators, who also include Democrats Tom Udall of New Mexico, Mark Udall of Colorado, Byron Dorgan of North Dakota and Republican Susan Collins of Maine. As Sen. Brownback put it when he introduced the measure, "A sensible and modest renewable energy standard will help encourage home-grown supplies like wind in Kansas and help diversify our nation's energy sources." It will help move the Smart Grid forward, making the nation's electrical infrastructure smarter. And it also will improve energy security in the U.S. and create plenty more - and very much needed - clean-energy jobs.

As for renewables such as wind energy, a national RES is essential. Why? Without it, utilities lack the business incentive to sign long-term deals for renewable energy. While banks have begun again to do some project financing and the Energy Department is awarding grants for renewable-energy companies, those efforts aren't sufficient to jump start the alternative-energy sector hit badly during the recession and the aftermath of the financial-markets crisis.

As for jobs, a national RES would spark plenty of new green jobs. A study early this year by Navigant Consulting, a major global energy consultancy, estimated that a national RES of 20 percent by 2020 would generate 191,000 more jobs. While the new Senate bill seeks a smaller 15 percent mandate by 2021, it would still create a significant number of much-needed jobs. These jobs would come in the wind, solar, biomass, waste-to-energy and hydropower industries that particularly benefit U.S. manufacturing states, the Southeastern U.S., and rural America hard-hit by the recent recession.

Still, a much more fundamental and broader reason exists for U.S. Congressional action. A renewable electrical standard in the world's leading superpower would have a profound world impact - now and in the future. Many countries - and, indeed, many U.S. states - already have such a standard. But a U.S. standard would send a message to the rest of the world that America's leaders are serious about clean energy and enhancing alternatives to fossil fuels. Already, in survey after survey, Americans themselves overwhelmingly favor development of renewables to reduce or eliminate U.S. dependence on foreign oil and to create green jobs.

And with the U.S. economy on the rebound, the timing couldn't be better. While the demand for electricity has temporarily declined in the U.S., economic growth will very quickly drive that demand back up. The time to put incentives in place for more renewable capacity is now. In today's interconnected world, we must consider the effects of what we do in each of our countries on the larger world community. Our

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planet's greener future depends on nurturing our natural and abundant renewable resources. And a renewable electricity standard in the U.S. would be a step in the right direction. We fervently hope that their colleagues will follow the example of the six stalwart senators and clear the proposed legislation this year.

Tulsi R Tanti is founder, chairman and managing director of Suzlon Limited. Suzlon is the majority shareholder in German-based REpower and the largest shareholder in Belgium engineering firm Hansen.

Jobs and the Illinois Elections

By Andris E. Cukurs

With just days until the Nov. 2 election, creating jobs continues to rank as the No. 1 issue in Illinois. But how will Chicago and Illinois *specifically* generate the hundreds of thousands of new jobs needed to propel us forward? And what are our major party candidates for the U.S. senate and governor proposing in terms of innovative approaches and programs to spur jobs for the 671,000 people in Illinois who were unemployed as of August? Voters must seek out the answers to those questions before Election Day – and then base their ballot-box choices on the candidates' answers.

For instance, what are the candidates advocating for the clean-energy industry – a prime area for new, high-paying jobs and investment in Illinois? The Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst estimates that Illinois could gain 70,000 jobs and see a net increase of about \$6.6 billion in investment revenue based on its share of clean-energy investments annually across the country.

Indeed, with its strong attributes in the clean-energy area, why shouldn't Chicago and Illinois become the Midwest's centers of renewable energy technology and investment? Are any of the candidates pushing that objective? One fledgling non-profit organization – the Clean Energy Trust – wants to achieve that goal.

This group of influential "green" business leaders and the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce are identifying promising entrepreneurs and scientists working on clean-energy projects in a variety of clean-tech sectors. Already, it has raised more than \$2.5 million in cash and in-kind services to help as seed money. That initiative promises to spur new jobs in clean technology – from renewable energy, next-generation transportation, the smart grid electrical-transmission system and energy efficiency programs, among others. For every \$1 million in spending, clean-energy investments create 16.7 jobs, while spending on fossil fuels, by contrast, generates only 6.3 jobs, estimates the Political Economy Research Institute.

Consider what wind-energy projects alone contribute to creating jobs. Illinois had 22 such projects as of July 20, 2010, ranking 6th in the U.S. in existing electrical capacity of more than 1,800 megawatts. They generate jobs for machinists, sheet-metal workers, truck drivers and the like. A recent Illinois State University study found that in Illinois, each new wind-turbine project generates 1,473 new jobs during construction.

Illinois State University Economics Professor Dave Loomis cites the states good wind resource and relatively unconstrained transmission. He also says Illinois' Renewable Portfolio Standard has stimulated wind-energy projects. That standard, cleared by state lawmakers, requires utilities to buy one-quarter of their electric generation from renewable-energy sources, such as wind farms, by 2025.

As for clean energy, wind produces no emissions. Additionally, wind-energy generation doesn't

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consume any non-renewable resources, such as oil, natural gas or coal. Wind is free and, with today's technology advances, it can be captured efficiently, at one-quarter the cost of solar power. In addition, the U.S. has enough wind resources to generate electricity for every home and business in the nation. Further, wind turbines come in a wide array of sizes. This means that a range of people and businesses can use them on a self-reliant basis – from single households and businesses to small towns and villages.

Besides, strong consumer support exists for wind. An October 2010 survey by Rasmussen Reports, found that 58 percent of U.S. voters think finding new sources of energy is more important than reducing the amount of energy Americans now consume. Politicians are taking heed and at the state-level are putting structure in place to encourage renewable energy growth. Just like Illinois, more than half of the states and the District of Columbia have passed a renewable-energy standard.

Still, Illinois' clean-energy jobs future will be even more promising if Congress passes its own National Renewable Electricity Standard. The House already has passed such a measure but it has languished in the Senate. This National Standard would trigger more renewable-energy investments from banks and private investors who need the requirement for utilities before they will loosen the loan-and-investment.

Certainly, other major job-creation initiatives are being advanced. But renewable energy constitutes such a promising area that it serves as a good starting point to judge Illinois' candidates for U.S. senate and governor. It's up to Illinois voters to insist that the candidates, before Election Day, be as specific as possible about how they would create new jobs for the state. As a starting point, let's ask them how they would spark clean-energy jobs.

Andris (Andy) E. Cukurs is chief executive of the North American operations of India-based Suzlon Energy Ltd., the world's third-largest wind turbine manufacturer.

EnergyBiz op-ed

Topic: "A way forward for the US wind industry amidst uncertainty about continued level of government subsidies."

Deadline: January 12, 2011

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Author: Andris E. Cukurs, CEO of North American operations of Suzlon Energy Ltd., the world's third-largest wind turbine maker

The Opportunity for Economic Growth and Solid Job Creation Through Wind Energy

Before easing in 2010, the growth of America's renewable energy industry was a bright spot in the national economy. In fact, according to the UN [Renewable 2010 Global Status Report](#), of all the new energy capacity installed in 2009 in the United States, 50 percent came from renewables.

Wind energy has had a significant role in the green energy expansion. Thirty-seven states now have wind turbines generating tens of thousands of megawatts of electricity and millions of dollars in local and state tax revenues and lease payments. In addition, these wind projects have produced 85,000 manufacturing jobs at more than 400 factories, with new jobs created in every state.

As the economy struggles to recover, the wind industry might not bounce back rapidly – much like many other manufacturing industries – but the opportunity in wind energy development and the country's need for diversified energy sources will certainly move wind forward.

In December 2010, Congress successfully passed the Section 1603 investment tax credit extension. The Section 1603 Treasury Grant Program, part of last year's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, provided cash grants that helped sustain the wind industry during a time when the tax equity market softened. The program has already provided more than 1,450 renewable energy projects with funding in excess of \$5.5 billion. This legislation will continue to create development and production incentives in the wind sector and other renewable energies through 2011.

In addition to the Section 1603 provision extension, wind project developers can receive the renewable energy production tax credit (PTC). This is a federal incentive for wind energy, offering a credit of 2.1 cents per kilowatt-hour. Last year, the stimulus bill extended the PTC for wind power facilities beginning construction through December 31, 2011.

This year also brings a new political environment and opportunity for federal energy leadership. As the economy improves and energy demand begins to rise again, meeting that demand with renewables will continue to be a big issue.

The freshman legislative class of 2011 is positioned to lead the charge to pass a national renewable electricity standard (RES). Thirty states already have their own RES, which sets a percentage of electricity that must come from wind and other renewable energy sources according to a specific timeline. The governors from these states are backing a national standard to stimulate new investment in renewable-energy projects.

Governors aren't the only backers of wind power either. A recent Rasmussen Report finds that 60 percent of voters believe investing in wind and other renewable energy sources offers a better long-term investment than in investing in fossil-fuel energy. Wind is a proven energy technology, and its costs often are competitive with energy generated from fossil fuels. Fossil fuel prices can be volatile, but creating a diversified energy infrastructure that incorporates renewables with traditional energy will help ease the cost fluctuations as economic factors change.

Late last year, a bipartisan group of four Republicans and four Democrats introduced a national RES bill independent of other energy policy efforts. Though the bill did not progress in 2010, these legislators

hope to get clearance this year. Creating a federal RES policy like this will help drive the growth of wind energy in the long run while project developers can still reap the benefits of short-term tax incentives.

This would position the wind industry for sustained growth in the U.S., maintaining manufacturing and creating construction and maintenance jobs and helping boost the local economies in which wind projects are developed.

I am optimistic about the future of wind in America. In the 10 years that Suzlon Wind Energy Corp. has been operating here, we've already installed more than 1,250 wind turbines producing thousands of megawatts of clean power. Having immediate tax incentives, political leadership on energy and climate issues, public support for renewables and the need for an improved energy structure will lay the groundwork for more wind projects and further underscore wind as a practical, sustainable and beneficial energy source.

Nov. 11, 2010

To the Letters to the Editor:

Your Nov. 8 article "Cost of Green Power Makes Projects Tougher" really underscores the need for Congress to adopt a national renewable electricity standard. Thirty states already have such a standard, which sets a percentage of electricity that must be purchased by utilities from wind and other renewable energy sources by a certain deadline, say 2020. And the governors of those 30 states back a national standard to stimulate new investment in renewable-energy projects.

Renewables need this standard so that they don't have to face the roller-coaster effects that prices of various energy sources are having on state utility regulators. Today, as an abundant supply of natural gas (among other factors) keeps energy prices below that for renewables, state regulators are nixing contracts that include higher-priced wind and solar sources. Regulators should look out for ratepayers' long-term interests and not just focus on short-term costs, especially if renewables are to play a solid role in our energy future.

The wind-energy industry doesn't want to raise anyone's utility bills, even the 0.7 percent the article mentions (which would represent \$1.40 more on a consumer's \$200 electric bill). But if regulators find that rate-payers are comfortable with a small increase for renewables, it may be acceptable.

And Americans certainly seem to favor that. The most recent Rasmussen Report finds that 60 percent of voters believe investing in wind and other renewable-energy sources offers a better long-term investment than in investing in fossil-fuel energy.

- Andris Cukurs, Suzlon Wind Energy Co.

Cost of Green Power Makes Projects Tougher Sell

New York Times

November 8, 2010

By MATTHEW L. WALD and TOM ZELLER Jr.

Michael Polsky's wind farm company was doing so well in 2008 that banks were happy to lend millions for his effort to light up America with clean electricity.

But two years later, Mr. Polsky has a product he is hard-pressed to sell.

His company, Invenergy, had a contract to sell power to a utility in Virginia, but state regulators rejected the deal, citing the recession and the lower prices of natural gas and other fossil fuels.

"The ratepayers of Virginia must be protected from costs for renewable energy that are unreasonably high," the regulators said. Wind power would have increased the monthly bill of a typical residential customer by 0.2 percent.

Even as many politicians, environmentalists and consumers want renewable energy and reduced dependence on fossil fuels, a growing number of projects are being canceled or delayed because governments are unwilling to add even small amounts to consumers' electricity bills.

Deals to buy renewable power have been scuttled or slowed in states including Florida, Idaho and Kentucky as well as Virginia. By the end of the third quarter, year-to-date installations of new wind power dropped 72 percent from 2009 levels, according to the American Wind Energy Association, a trade group. Mr. Polsky calls the focus on short-term costs short-sighted.

"They have to look for the ratepayers' long-term interest," he said, "not just the bills this year."

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Electricity generated from wind or sun still generally costs more — and sometimes a lot more — than the power squeezed from coal or natural gas. Prices for fossil fuels have dropped in part because the recession has reduced demand. In the case of natural gas, newer drilling techniques have opened the possibility of vast new supplies for years to come.

The gap in price can pit regulators, who see their job as protecting consumers from unreasonable rates, against renewable energy developers and utility companies, many of which are willing to pay higher prices now to ensure a broader energy portfolio in the future.

In April, for example, the state public utilities commission in Rhode Island rejected a power-purchase deal for an offshore wind project that would have cost 24.4 cents a kilowatt-hour. The utility now pays about 9.5 cents a kilowatt hour for electricity from fossil fuels.

The state legislature responded by passing a bill allowing the regulators to consider factors other than price. The commission then approved an agreement to buy electricity from a smaller wind farm, although that decision is being challenged in the courts.

Similarly, in Kentucky this year, the public service commission voted down a contract for a local utility, Kentucky Power, to buy electricity from NextEra Energy Resources in Illinois.

According to the commission, Kentucky Power argued that the contract would position the utility “to better meet growing environmental requirements and impending government portfolio mandates for renewable energy” and that it would benefit customers.

But Kentucky’s attorney general, Jack Conway, joined by business and industrial electricity users, opposed the deal, contending that it would have increased a typical residential customer’s rates by about 0.7 percent and was “a discretionary expense” that the utility’s customers could ill afford.

Commissioner James W. Gardner, the lone dissenting commissioner, protested that “there is a necessity for this power” and said that “there are great pressures nationally and in Kentucky to increase renewables.”

Companies that make solar cells and wind machines argue that a national energy policy is needed to guarantee them a market that will allow their industry to develop. Clean power will be an important industry globally for years, they say, and if the United States does not subsidize renewable energy now, it risks falling far behind other countries.

They point to China, which is rapidly increasing the amount of electricity it generates from renewable sources. In its most recent quarterly assessment of the renewable energy sector, the accounting and consulting firm Ernst & Young identified China as the most attractive market for investment in renewable energy.

In part, the analysis suggested, this reflected the failure of American lawmakers to pass a national renewable energy standard and the looming expiration of a Treasury program that allowed renewable developers to receive cash grants in lieu of tax credits.

In Europe, many national governments have guaranteed prices for energy from sun or wind. As a result, renewable advocates say, many countries are on track to meet the European Union’s goal of 20 percent of energy from renewable sources by 2020.

The United States has relied on a combination of state renewable energy mandates and federal tax credits to encourage greater reliance on energy from renewable sources. Legislation that would have set a price on carbon-dioxide emissions and included a standard for increasing the share of clean energy in the nation’s electricity portfolio failed in Congress this year.

"Our investors tell us they're nervous about all the uncertainty," said John Cusack, the president of Gifford Park Associates, a sustainability management and investment consulting firm in Eastchester, N.Y. "They don't know what's going to happen."

To be sure, a lot of renewable power development is still going forward. The American Wind Energy Association estimates that wind farms capable of producing 6,300 megawatts of wind power are under construction, and that a busy second half of 2010 would leave installations about 50 percent behind last year. Solar power is becoming less expensive, and its use is expanding rapidly. But it still accounts for less than 1 percent of the nation's electricity needs, providing enough to serve about 350,000 homes.

Renewable energy supporters argue that higher fossil fuel prices will eventually make renewable energy more competitive — and at times over the last two decades, when the price for natural gas has spiked, wind power in particular has been a relative bargain. Advocates also argue that while the costs might be higher now, as the technology matures and supply chains and manufacturing bases take root, clean sources of power will become more attractive.

Fold in the higher costs of extracting and burning fossil fuels on human health, the climate and the environment, many advocates argue, and renewable technologies like wind power are already cheaper. "One of the problems in the United States is that we haven't been willing to confront the tough questions," said Paul Gipe, who sits on the steering committee of the Alliance for Renewable Energy, a group advocating energy policy reform.

"We have to ask ourselves, 'Do we really want renewables?'" he said. "And if the answer to that is yes, then we're going to have to pay for them."

(This material is being distributed by DJE, Inc. on behalf of Suzlon Wind Energy Corporation. Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.)

Making a Case for Wind, a Solid Jobs & Economic Growth Engine

Creating jobs and revving the economy will be top priorities in Congress when the new lawmakers take office, including California Representatives Jeff Denham, Andy Vidak and Karen Bass. The growth of America's wind energy industry has been a bright spot in the economy across the country. In fact, of all the energy generated in 2009 in the U.S., 50 percent came from renewables. We urge these new House members to help continue that strong growth.

Thirty-seven states now have wind turbines generating tens of thousands of megawatts of electricity and millions of dollars in local and state tax revenues and lease payments. In addition, these wind projects have produced 85,000 manufacturing jobs at more than 400 factories, with new jobs created in every state. California is a leading wind state in the U.S. with 2,739 MW of wind energy. Recently, the Alta Wind Energy Center broke ground for the largest wind power project in the country. The turbines will supply more than 600,000 homes in Southern California with electricity.

Foremost, current Congressional members have an opportunity to make an important decision that would immediately benefit the wind energy sector in the new year. The Section 1603 Treasury Grant Program, part of last year's stimulus plan, will expire at the end of 2010. These tax provisions are vital to the continued growth of renewable energy. Last year, the cash grants helped sustain the wind industry during a time when the tax equity market vanished. Without this legislation, the wind sector will lose development and production incentives.

In addition to the Section 1603 provision extension, the freshman class of 2011 is positioned to lead the charge to pass a national renewable electricity standard (RES) soon after Congress convenes in January. Thirty states already have their own RES, which sets a percentage of electricity that must come from wind and other renewable energy sources by a certain date, say by 2020. And the 30 governors in those states are backing a national standard to stimulate new investment in renewable-energy projects.

But governors aren't the only backers of wind power. A recent Rasmussen Report finds that 60 percent of voters believe investing in wind and other renewable energy sources offers a better long-term investment than in investing in fossil-fuel energy. Wind is a proven energy technology, and its costs often are competitive with energy generated from fossil fuels. And a bipartisan group of four Republicans and four Democrats have introduced a national RES they hope will get clearance early in the next session if lawmakers don't approve in the current lame-duck session.

But it's the new members of Congress, familiar with how wind power supports job creation and the economy in their states, who can spark a call to action among their fellow lawmakers to pass a national RES. We welcome their action.

Sincerely,

Andris E. Cukurs

CEO of North American operations of Suzlon Energy Ltd., the world's third-largest wind turbine maker.

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Creating jobs and revving the economy will be top priorities in Congress when the new lawmakers take office, including Illinois Representatives Joe Walsh, Robert Dold, Adam Kinzinger, Randy Hultgren and Bobby Schilling and Senator Mark Kirk. The growth of America's wind energy industry has been a bright spot in the economy across the country. In fact, of all the energy generated in 2009 in the U.S., 50 percent came from renewables. We urge these new Congressional members to help continue that strong growth.

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Foremost, current Congressional members have an opportunity to make an important decision that would immediately benefit the wind energy sector in the new year. The Section 1603 Treasury Grant Program, part of last year's stimulus plan, will expire at the end of 2010. These tax provisions are vital to the continued growth of renewable energy. Last year, the cash grants helped sustain the wind industry during a time when the tax equity market vanished. Without this legislation, the wind sector will lose development and production incentives.

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